



CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

IN THE

HINDI LANGUAGE,

AN ADDRESS BEFORE

THE NORTH INDIA MISSIONARY CONFERENCE

IN

MUSSOORIE

And reprinted from the

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE

BY

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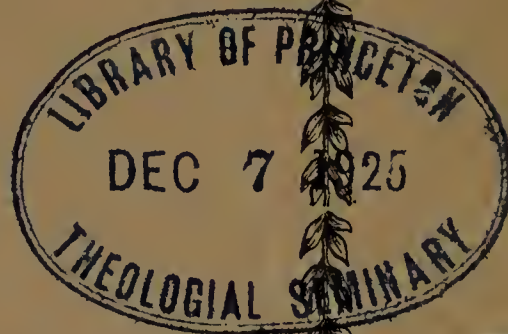
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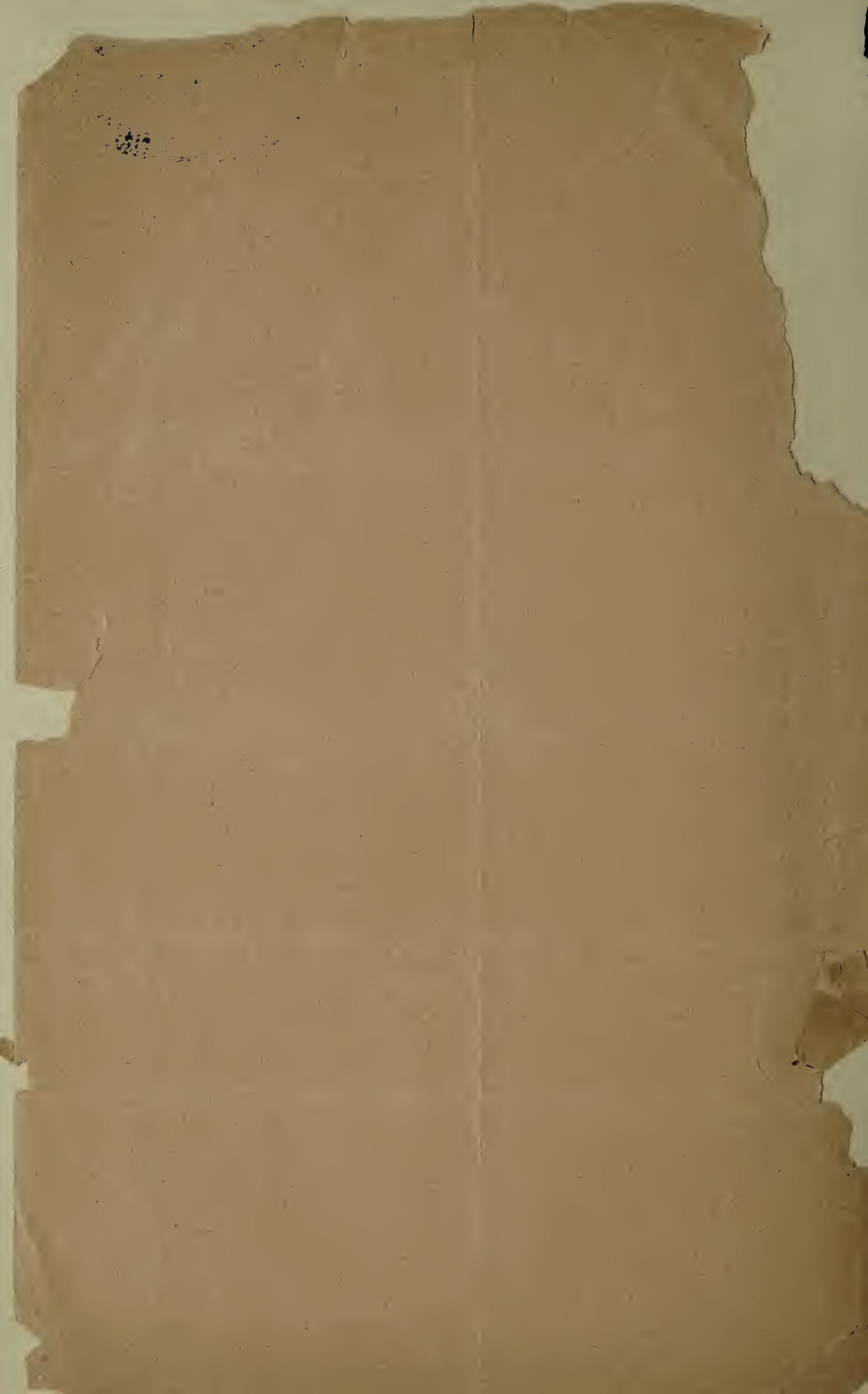
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Christian Literature in the Hindi Language.

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This paper may properly begin with a brief account of existing books and tracts in the Hindi language. Much the greater number of these are the publications of the North India Christian Tract and Book Society, and of the North India Branch of the Christian Literature Society, both having a common Depot in Allahabad; but the value and usefulness of the books cannot easily be determined by a study of their titles in an alphabetical Price List. Publications, other than those of these Societies, are either those of various missions, or the ventures of authors who print at their own expense.

Among the presses from which this literature is issued we name the Allahabad Mission Press, the Indian Christian Press, Allahabad, the Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta, the Medical Hall Press, Benares, the Methodist Publishing House, Lucknow, the Church Mission Press, Secundra, Agra, the Rajputana Mission Press, Ajmeer, the German Evangelical Lutheran Mission Press, Ranchi, the Presbyterian Mission, Darjeeling.

It is hoped that before the end of this year a Descriptive Catalogue will be published, in which a conspectus will be given of all existing Hindi literature, under the following heads: Biblical, Catechetical, Controversial, Devotional, Practical, Historical (including Biography), Narrative, Homiletic, Descriptive, Educational, Special (Women, children, etc.) Miscellaneous, Periodical.

I. BIBLICAL.

The Bible is the highest treasure of Christian literature, and books which have to do with its elucidation and exposition naturally form the first class in our distribution.

Unfortunately our Christian literature in Hindi is weaker in this class of books than in any other, precisely where it ought to be strongest. There are many Catechisms and statements of Christian doctrine, but almost nothing which takes the student direct to the Bible and enables him to attain any considerable mastery of the Sacred Volume.

We have no Bible Dictionary in Hindi, no Concordance, not even a Hindi Reference Bible. The revision of the Hindi Bible has been in progress for the past ten years, and until it is completed we shall have to wait for a Reference Bible and a Concordance.

There is a small Hand-book to the Bible by the Church of Scotland Mission in Darjeeling, and an Analysis of the Books of the Old Testament by the German Mission in Ranchi. The Tract Society publish a Hand book to the Acts of the Apostles, with analysis of the Pauline Epistles, and a Harmony of the Gospels. I am happy to announce for the Tract Society a book of Helps to the Study of the Bible corresponding in some degree to those of the Oxford and Cambridge Presses, which will soon be issued.

The list of Commentaries and Expositions is most meagre. The Tract Society offer a solitary Commentary on St. Mark, and the American Presbyterian Mission one on the Prophecies of Jeremiah. The Church of Scotland Mission in Darjeeling have printed Commentaries on Genesis and Exodus, St. Matthew and St. John; but the Hindi as spoken in Darjeeling differs a good deal from the Standard Hindi and it is not certain whether these would prove generally useful.

Among the books most urgently needed in Hindi we name an adequate series of Expositions of the Books of the Bible, a Topical Index and a Bible Dictionary.

At a recent conference of Bishops of the Church of England in India arrangements were made for a series of Commentaries to be written in English as a basis of translation into the Indian languages. It is understood that some of these Commentaries have already been prepared, but are not yet in print. They may be of great value to the Indian Churches.

II. CATECHETICAL.

The next division is called Catechetical. This word is taken in its earlier and wider sense, to denote whatever is written for the instruction of inquirers, and for the training of the Christian community in the mysteries of the Christian faith.

Catechisms in the narrower sense are plentiful. The Church of England Catechism in the Book of Common Prayer, Luther's two Catechisms, the Small and the Large, and the Westminster Shorter Catechism, are all in Hindi. The Darjeeling Mission issue an Elements of Christian Doctrine, and the S. P. G. Mission in Chota Nagpore a translation of the first of the St. Paul's Series Manuals of Christian Doctrine.

Besides these and the Methodist Mission Catechisms, there is the Tract Society's list of undenominational Catechisms, the *Prashan Uttar*, *Gurugyan*, *Khrishtiya Dharin Sagyan Pustak*, *Prem Charite* (Life of Christ) and *Mukti Prashanavali*.

After these Catechisms come Barth's Scripture History, Peep o Day, Line upon Line, and various selections of Scripture Texts—Bread from Heaven, Ten Times Ten, &c.

In *Dharm Diwakar* we have a useful book, the only one of its kind, on the Evidences of Christianity.

Ishwariya Rachit Granth is an argument for the necessity of a divine revelation, from the Ajmer Press, which also prints a translation of a useful Text book of Our Lord's Teaching, Parts I and II.

This division may be closed with mention of the Thirty Nine Articles of the Church of England, the Confessio Augustana of the Lutheran Churches, a full Exposition of the Westminster Shorter Catechism, a Catechism on the Apostle's Creed by the Bishop of Chota Nagpur, an Exposition of the Creed by Rev. Luther D. Singh, and a translation by Rev. A. G. Danielsson of Part I of a valued Swedish Christian Dogmatic as a Text book in Theology.

III. CONTROVERSIAL.

The next division is that entitled Controversial. For Hindus and Mohammedans we have two standard treatises, the *Mat Pariksha*, and the *Sat Mat Nirūpan*. These are among the earliest books issued in the Hindi language, and are still a necessary part of the studies of our Catechists and Preachers. With these should be mentioned Rev. N. Goreh's Refutation of the Hindu Philosophy.

For the Arya Samaj we have the Tract Society's Six Lectures, and a little book of 40 pp. from the Ajmer Press called *Arya Somaj Darpan*.

Unfortunately a controversy with the Roman Church has become necessary in some quarters, and is met by Rev. J. F. Ullmann's *Popiyat ka Ahwal*, and the German Lutheran *Roman Mat Khandan*.

Of smaller controversial writings there is a considerable number from the well-known *Dharmtula* and Dr. Hooper's *Hindu Dharm ka Barnan* to the widely circulated *Pariksha* Series. In these tracts, selling at one and two pice each, almost the whole field of criticism of the Hindu religion is traversed, idolatry, caste, asceticism, pilgrimages, and the like. The latest addition to this division is the *Karm Marg* just published by the Tract Society.

The controversial division of our Hindi Christian Literature might be considered sufficiently complete and satisfactory, were it not that the two standard treatises and many of the smaller tracts were written many years ago, and take no note of the changed methods of defending both the Hindu and Mohammedan religions. It may be questioned if

they fully meet the wants of the Christian student of to-day, or of the intelligent inquirer. And if we look for books which relate to the newer phases of Hinduism we shall find only here and there a small and little known Tract of some local controversy, such as the *Swami Dadu Dayalji* published in the Ajmer Press.

IV. DEVOTIONAL.

Under the next head of Devotional we name first the Book of Common Prayer, the closely related Service Books of the three Lutheran Missions, German, Swedish and Lutheran, and a small *Sadharan Sewá Rit* from Darjeeling.

We owe to the Rev. A. Logsdail, S. P. G. Mission, a Responsary with selections from the Anglican Prayer Book, a Book of Prayers for family use and another for schools and young people.

Next to these books of Prayer, we mention the various Hymn books in Hindi. Almost every mission of size has its own Hymn book. Besides those generally familiar, attention should be called to the *Sákshi Bani* of the German Mission, Ranchi, in which some of the choicest Hymnody of Germany has been put into Hindi almost unmixed with Urdu. The accompanying book of tunes, *Rag Pustak*, is done in the best style of music publishing.

Of smaller collections we mention the *Git aur Bhajan Mala*, Ajmer, the *Yishu San Kirtan* of the C. L. S., the *Kalisiya ke Git*, C. M. S. Mandla, the *Git Sopan* with 67 Hymns translated from Hymns Ancient and Modern, by Rev. G. F. Hamilton, Hazaribagh, and the Tract Society's latest issue, *Khrishtiya Git Sangrah*, with 250 Hymns and Bhajans, sold at the price of two annas each.

Besides these Prayer and Hymn books, we can find only three or four books all told to be entered as Devotional—the Imitation of Christ, Thomas A Kempis, the *Prabhu Bhoj Subhagya Upkar* (Aids to Communicants, Anglican), and one or two brief treatises on Prayer. Not any one of these has attained a general circulation.

V. PRACTICAL.

We now come to another class which has been almost entirely neglected—practical teaching on Christian living. To some extent the topics are included in the catechisms already mentioned; but no catechism has to do with the theory rather than with the practice of religion.

It is true there are some brief tracts on lying, cheating, language, debt and the like. There is a translation of Mrs. Shabusivf-Lady and Aya, which was written on the basis of the Ten Commandments.

ments, and which ought to be better known than it is. Miss Tucker wrote many of her little booklets to enforce the lessons of Christian morality.

But if you seek a book showing how Christians ought to live in the bazars and villages of India, what kind of an example they ought to set, how they should order their households, how conduct their business, how bring up their children in the fear of God, how to act as Church members, how advance the progress of the Gospel, you will not find it. So with regard to the sins so fearfully prevalent in India, it will be hard to find any book or chapter against pride or sensuality, or anger, or self-seeking. The only exception is intemperance, against which the Tract Society publish three small tracts and a Temperance Catechism, and the Ranchi Press an earnest warning, *Dhoka mat Khao*.

There certainly exists here a great gap in the body of our existing Christian literature. For surely the Christian Church must lift up her voice, not only against idolatry and caste, but against every form of immorality, and in behalf of every form of virtue. And in keeping so comparatively silent the Christian Church is neglecting one of its chief duties in the world; to be a witness for righteousness, to denounce unsparingly whatever in a nation's life is dishonouring to God and degrading to man. I do not know any book more urgently needed than one, or many, which should point out to men and women how they should bear themselves in the several relations of life from childhood to old age, a Manual of Christian living.

VI. HISTORICAL.

The next series, Historical, including Biography, could almost be counted on the fingers of one hand, were it not for the excellent series of Historical Story books published by the C. L. S. and mentioned in the Tract Society Catalogue.

There are three Church Histories—Barth's Church History published by the Tract Society, *Khristian Mandli ka Sankshipt Brittant*, by the German Mission, Ranchi, and a Hand book of Church History recently printed by the Swedish Mission, Chindwara, C. P.

There are three Biographies, not very widely read, Dr. Judson, Dr. Duff and Dr. Martin Luther.

VII. NARRATIVE.

Under the head of Narrative, we find a long list of short stories published by the Tract Society and the C. L. S. Of longer narratives there are besides the unique Pilgrim's Progress, only a few that call for mention. The *Mumuksh Brittant*, or Indian Pilgrim, heads the

list, followed by *Phulmani and Karuna*, *Thuma ki Katha*, the Story of Sukhni, Little Henry and his Bearer, Breaking His Fetters, and the beautiful Sweet First Fruits.

VIII. HOMILETIC.

The next class, Homiletic, is practically empty. It seems to have been assumed by the Missions that Indian Christians will preach without being taught. We find only one volume of sermons in Hindi, the *Upama Batika* of the C. L. S. The *Chhand Sangrah*, *Barnan Bari* and *Dharmm Varnan Sankrant* contain useful suggestions.

The Tract Society has just published a new edition of Dr. Rouse's Hand book to the Christian Ministry, *Ishwar Ke Sahkarmmi*, which ought to be in the hands of every preacher and Catechist; and will soon issue a small treatise on the art of Preaching by the Rev. J. G. McGavran.

IX. DESCRIPTIVE.

For books under the head of Descriptive, we are indebted chiefly to the C. L. S., whose well known series covers a wide field of interesting and instructive literature.

X. EDUCATIONAL.

It is not necessary to refer at length to the well known Educational books of the C. L. S., the M. E. Publishing House, the German Mission Press at Ranchi, the Scotch Mission in Darjeeling. But attention may be called to the need of a well arranged and graded system of Bible instruction for Mission schools. The Tract Society has recently published in Roman Urdu the outline of Bible Lessons prepared for the schools of the Methodist Mission covering the studies of five years; and these could easily be used by teachers of Hindi Schools as well.

XI. SPECIAL.

For children only a few books have been written in Hindi, other than the many short stories already mentioned, the Catechisms, Peep of Day, &c. The Tract Society publish a Child's Acts of the Apostles, and the Phillips Memorial Life of Christ for children.

For Sunday Schools, beyond the various Hymn books, Catechisms, and a series of 48 Lessons, called Picture Leaflets of the Life of Christ, no text book of permanent value has yet been written. The International Lessons have had it all their own way, and valuable as that course has been and is, it must be confessed that it does not yield itself to systematic training in the things of God.

XII. MISCELLANEOUS.

Under the head of Miscellaneous, we find the Health Series, the Indian Reform Series, and the Miscellaneous Series of the C. L. S.

Of volumes, there is a Grammar and a Dictionary of Ancient Greek published by the Tract Society; Mr. Greaves has given us a small Hindi Dictionary, and a Grammar of the Ramayan which every Missionary who uses the Hindi language should know.

XIII. PERIODICAL.

Unhappily there is at present, so far as I am informed, no Christian Magazine in the Hindi language. There are two small newspapers, *Gharbandhu* published by the German Evangelical Mission in Ranchi, and the *Hitarth Patrika* by the Rev. Dr. Husband, Ajmer. The Woman's Friend, *Abla Hitkarak*, and the Children's Friend, *Bal Hitkarak*, of the Methodist Publishing House are the only periodicals for Women and Children. We must not overlook the Tract Society's series of four page monthly handbills, of which from 350,000 to 400,000 are issued every year.

We have noted in our review an almost entire lack of anything written for the elucidation and exposition of the Bible. I consider that this ought to be laid heavily on the heart and conscience of all who have to do with Indian Christians speaking the Hindi language.

For theological instruction of the higher grade we have almost nothing to offer.

Of devotional literature, to supplement the Bible and the Hymn-book, we have almost nothing.

The life of practical godliness, as we have seen, is almost entirely untouched in the literature which has come under review.

Omitting the smaller treatises called tracts, the whole existing body of Christian literature in the Hindi language would not exceed some two or three score books. And while we are thankful to have even this much, we must acknowledge that by the missions at work among the Hindi-speaking people no main branch of mission effort has been so much neglected as the preparation of a suitable and adequate Christian literature.

Let us not, however, be discouraged. There are many signs that a brighter day is at hand. The turning point may be found in the Decennial Missionary Conference which met in Madras last December, by which two things were accomplished for Christian Literature – 1st, Attention has been called to the great need, and 2nd, A plan has been inaugurated by which that need may be met.

“The time is come” said the Christian Literature Committee, “for a united forward movement. To help in fostering this movement your Committee is convinced that a wider and more detailed organiza-

tion of the missionary forces is imperative. It therefore recommends the Conference to pass the following resolutions." Of these resolutions we give two.

"Resolution I. That a large, representative and permanent Literature Committee, embracing Missionaries, Mission workers and persons interested in Missions be formed in each extensive language area. Each such Committee shall consider the needs of the area with regard to literature for Christians and all classes of non-Christians, and shall endeavour to promote the production and circulation of suitable pure, instructive and interesting literature, in co-operation with existing organizations, if there are such."

"Resolution VIII. The Conference relegates the following subjects to the General Committee for disposal :

"(1.) The production of a series of small books, in which there shall be little or no antagonism to Hinduism or Mohammedanism as such, setting forth in a sympathetic spirit the chief points of Christian faith and practice, and appealing to the spiritual nature of the reader.

"(2.) A series of Manuals for inquirers, stating briefly the elements of Christian truth.

"(3.) Books on Christian Evidence best suited for class instruction of non-Christians.

"(4.) Separate Hand-books of the Indian non-Christian religions for Theological students.

"(5.) Books to aid Missionaries and Evangelists.

"(6.) Devotional literature for Christians.

"(7.) Literature for the home, including stories.

"(8.) A scripture instruction scheme.

"(9.) Books suited to help in the study of the Bible, and adapted to the needs of Indian readers.

"(10.) Books and tracts specially adapted to meet current phases of thought among educated men of different religious faiths.

"(12.) Temperance and Purity literature for schools and general circulation."

To these are added under another resolution :

"(1.) The establishment or encouragement of newspapers conducted on Christian principles for the general public, and for Christians. Also periodicals for women.

"(5.) The consideration of Anti-Christian publications and attacks on Christianity, and the preparation of suitable replies when necessary.

"(9.) The encouragement of literature for Sunday Schools."

The appointment of a permanent Literature Committee for the

Hindi language area would be a matter of easy accomplishment, were it not for two difficulties, the very great extent of the area, and the number of Churches and Missions engaged within the area.

The Hindi language is spoken from Darjeeling to Bikanir, and from the borders of Tibet to the Bombay Presidency. Within this area there are at least thirty-five Churches and Missionary societies.* A fairly representative Literature Committee could not consist of less than thirty to forty members. Such a Committee could never meet, owing to the great distances to be traversed, and would be of little practical use.

There is, however, a method by which the desired ends may be attained.

The Hindi language embraces a considerable number of quite widely differing dialects. These are grouped by Indian Philologists into four main divisions, each with its well-defined geographical area. These divisions are :

I. The Bihari group, spoken in the Province of Bihar, and in the Eastern districts of Bengal.

II. The Eastern Hindi group, spoken in Oudh, in the native states of Bagelkhand and the Chattisgarh Division of the C. P.

III. The Western Hindi group, including Rohilkhand, the Ganges and Jumna Doab, Muttra, Agra, Jhansi, Sagar, Damoh, Jabalpur and the valley of the Nerbudda, as far as Khandwa.

iv. The Rajputana group, covering the Central India Agency, and the native states of Rajputana as far as Bikanir.

This linguistic and geographical distribution will furnish a natural basis for a large Hindi Literature Committee organized in four sections, and these sections working together through their four secretaries.

The Behari section would include the Missions in Bihar, Tirhoot, Darjeeling and other parts of Bengal where mission work is conducted

* These are, The Baptist Missionary Society, and Zenana Mission ; the London Missionary Society; the American Board ; the Church Missionary Society, and C. E. Zenana Missionary Society ; the S. P. G., and its Ladies' Association ; the Dublin University Mission ; the Church of Scotland, and its Women's Association ; the United Free Church of Scotland, and N. F. C. W. F. M. S.: The United Orig. Secess. Ch. of Scotland ; The Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.; the Canadian Presbyterian Church ; the Ref. Presb. Church in North America ; the German Evangelical Miss. Soc., U. S. A. ; the Wesleyan Miss. Soc. ; the Meth. Episcopal. Church, U. S. A., in three Conferences, N. I., N. W. I. and C. P., and the M. E. Woman's Foreign Missionary Society ; the German Evangelical Lutheran ; the Ev. National Miss. Soc. of Stockholm ; the Christian Disciples Mission, and its Women's Auxiliaries ; the Friends F. M. Association ; the American Friends Mission ; the Ref. Episcopal Church, U. S. A., ; the American Mennonites : The Kurku and C. I. Hill Mission ; the Balaghat Mission ; the Pentecost Band : the Salvation Army ; the Scandinavian Missionary Alliance ; and two important Woman's Missionary Societies, the Z. B. M. S., and the W. U. M. S. of America.

chiefly in the Hindi; its meeting place might be Bankipur or Monghyr. The Eastern Hindi section would naturally have its centre at Benares; the Western Hindi section at Allahabad, and the Rajputana section at Ajmer.

If these Section Committees should consist of an average of ten members each, all fully committed to secure by mutual action the progress and development of Christian Literature in Hindi, over this extensive and important area, we should have an organization which would carry commanding weight in its appeal for co-operation to every Mission engaged within the Hindi-speaking field.

But under any organization, to achieve the results we desire there must be persons who will prepare the necessary literature, and there must be those who will put it into circulation.

At present in the whole Hindi language area there are few Missionaries to whom we can look for the preparation of Hindi books and tracts, and most of these are so occupied in other lines of work that little time is left for authorship. Among our Indian Christians who write in Hindi there are some who are doing good work, but they have not the requisite training to enter the higher fields of literature. Thus far our University graduates have not developed the gift of authorship, so far as the Hindi language is concerned. Perhaps a concerted action on the part of all the missions to promote the production of Hindi literature may bring forward suitable men and women who have not yet taken up literary work.

To this end some of the mission force must be encouraged to undertake such study of the Hindi language and literature as shall qualify them for authorship. It is not enough to pass the usual examinations and let our studies proceed no farther. It is not enough to be able to speak fairly well, after the manner of the Padriai Boli. A generation ago there were men then growing old, who could speak and write in Hindi with the accuracy and precision, the idiomatic force and sweetness of the most accomplished natives they met. But Smith and Leopold and Ullmann, John Parsons, John Christian and William McCumbey are with us no longer, and we look almost in vain for the men who can preach and write as they did. This burden must be laid on the heart and conscience of the younger men and women of our missions to-day. We must have Literary Missionaries, whose gifts of authorship, nourished in spiritual communion with God, may be consecrated to the preparation of the books and tracts which India needs.

But besides the preparation of such a literature, attention must be paid to its circulation. The subject is too large to enter fully into on this occasion.

The Decennial Missionary Conference has made an appeal to all the Missions. It is suggested that a stock of books, tracts and leaflets should be kept in every station, and where possible a book shop opened; that each evangelist should have with him a supply of suitable literature for sale or free distribution; that after every preaching service books should be offered for sale; that each missionary should cause to be kept in a simple tabular form the number of books, tracts and leaflets circulated monthly by himself and his fellow-labourers.*

It is urged that each Mission, in its Annual or Quarterly Conferences, should undertake to give both the production and circulation of Christian Literature a place in its review of work accomplished, and in its consideration of the various lines of work for which arrangements should be made as part of the business of the Mission.

Within the next three or four months every Mission in the Hindi language area will be meeting for the preparation of its reports and the transaction of its Annual business. Is it too much to ask that each Missionary present in this Conference will constitute himself, or herself, a committee of one to see that in the Annual meeting of the Mission this appeal of the Decennial Conference be carried into effective action?

* The following table is recommended for adoption :—

No. OF BIBLES, BOOKS, &c., EXCLUDING SCHOOL BOOKS, circulated by

Month	Bibles	Testaments	Portions	Total SS.	Books	Tracts	Leaflets	Total	Total Proceeds
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A book is a publication priced at one anna or above. All publications below an anna in price are called tracts. Leaflets are two or four paged tracts for free distribution.



